From 16 to 11 in 8

Gaelscoil an Ghoirt Álainn

Feabhra 2001

Rang Caoimhe

It began in '93 but where will it end?

Gaelscoil An Ghoirt Álainn was founded in 1993. A group of prospective parents wanted an all-Irish education for their children. Eoghan Ó Laoire, who was later to be the first chairman of the board of management, headed the founding committee.

It was decided that the Gaelscoil would also be multi-denominational-the first multi-denominational gaelscoil in Ireland.

After many meetings and a great deal of hard work premises were found St.Mary's, Middle Glanmire Road, Montenotte. The pupils were ready and sanction was given by the Department Of Education.

On September 1st 1993, múinteoir Fiona welcomed fifteen Junior Infants and múinteoir Erika Ó Laoire welcomed seven into 1st class. Newspaper reporters and television crew were there for this 'first' in Irish education. We were even covered by RTÉ in the evening news. (See page 8)

Since 1993 the numbers of the school have grown immensely, now at 214 pupils, 1 príomhoide, 8 full-time class teachers and 5 part-time teachers.

Béibhinn agus a máthair ar an gcéad lá
Lisa in The Echo

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Why we are special.

- First class in the school
- Almost the first to leave
- The smallest class in the school
- We have lost some friends along the way
- We have seen many changes in the school
- We are here longer than any teacher except Fiona
- We are going to miss Gaelscoil an Ghoirt Álainn when we leave

Who is in this class?

The list does not follow any order. It just depends who does the writing!

Béibhinn Ní Laoire is 11 years old. She enjoys playing the violin and the piano. She also likes Horse riding, swimming and reading. She has three younger siblings in the school.

Ciara Cnoic is 11 years old. She plays the violin and traditional tin whistle. She also enjoys Irish dancing and swimming. She has two younger siblings in the school.

Lisa Ní hAodh is 12 years old. She plays the violin and also does karate, and has purple belt. She likes reading and running. Her dream is to be in the Olympics running 5000 metres for Ireland when she is older. She has a younger brother, Jamie, in the school.

Who is in the class ?

Did you know that pupils in this class have gone hunting and like wrestling. Others have been to Spain, Italy, Wales and even Kerry. When younger some used to climb under the table to look in strange places!

Cathy Cúisín is 12 years old. She likes reading, writing and playing the Flute. She would love to be a clothes designer when she is older. She has a younger brother, Dan, in the school.

Seán Ó Caoimh is 11 years old. He loves Horse riding, rugby and Tae-kwon-Doe. He has a younger brother, Conor, in the school. Is he a fan of Eminem?

Ciara Breathnach is 12 years old. She loves Irish Dancing and competing in competitions regularly. She would like to be a professional dancer or an interior designer when she is older.

Cathal MacGuidhir is 12 years old. He likes Gaelic Football, and hurling.

Emma Ní hUaine is 12 years old. She loves Irish Dancing and competing in dancing competitions regularly. She also plays the piano.

Edwina Ní Thoimhneáin is 12 years old. She loves music. She also likes swimming and reading, ballet and soccer. She has three siblings in the school.

Seosamh De Freine is 11 years old. He likes fishing, soccer, hurling and hunting.

Simon Ó Céilleachair is 11 years old. He likes computers and watching television. He has a younger brother in the school.

An last but not least!

Did we forget anybody? Remember Lyndsay, Allasdar, Tadhg, Laura and Barry? And Sarah for a while, but she can still be seen around the school. Lyndsay is also in school. Allasdar is in Donegal, Tadhg is in Carraigtouhill, Laura is in Rathcormac and Barry is in Kerry.

Music, music, music, but what Year?

Rang a sé dar le Lisa and Béibhinn

Well we have enjoyed rang a sé a lot and it's not over yet we are still looking forward to yet another school tour with Caoimhe. We have already gone on three school tours and enjoyed every one of them a lot. We have 11 left in our class and and we started off with 16.

The only teacher that is left from when the school started is Fiona and she has seen all the changes that we have seen and the way we changed.
We have had six teachers so far and all of them have been very nice. The reason we decided to do this booklet was because we wanted the school to remember us by some thing and we will always remember them.
Go raibh maith agaibh agus slán ó rang a sé.

Photograph of class taken in May 2000

Favourite school Tour

Béibhinn Ní Laoire

My favourite school tour was when I was in 4th class. We went to Oyster Haven, an activity centre in West Cork. We left the school by bus at 8.00 in the morning. When we reached Oyster Haven, we played some games first. Then we were divided into two groups. The aim was to have the most points by the end of the day. Points were gained by winning each activity given to us. Our first activity was having to fill a long hollow pole full of water from a Tidal Estuary nearby. The first team to fill it won. The only problem was there were holes in the poles. By the time we were finished we were all very wet. We then had to cross the swampy Estuary on a slippy pole. It was very difficult. Then we glided across the water on a swing that was attached to a rope. Our teamates had to pull the rope so the person swinging could get to the other side. After lunch we put wet suits on us and went into the sea, it was freezing! We went kayaking, canoeing and balance boarding. It is great fun. We left on the bus at 5-o clock.
I enjoyed myself so much that back and did a course there over the summer holidays. I would highly recommend it to anyone age 8+.

Would you cross a swampy Estuary on a slippy pole?"

Oysterhaven

If you wanted to go to Oysterhaven, would you be able to give directions to the driver?

What we remember……

Q. What do you remember about our first day at school?

Simon: Toys
Cathal: Lego
Ciara C: Coming in the school door and saying I don't want to go back to play school.
Seán: The toys
Seosamh: Lesley sitting in front of me.
Ciara B: My brother sitting in front of me.
Emma: Playing with play dough.
Cathy: Seeing Lisa by the window.
Béibhinn: Crying and getting my picture taken outside the school gate.
Lisa: Cathy coming over to me.
Edwina: Crying.

Who is your favourite teacher so far?

Emma: Caoimhe
Seán: Aine
Seosamh: Aine.
Ciara B: Caoimhe and Fiona.
Edwina: Caoimhe and Fiona
Béibhinn: Caoimhe.
Cathal: Caoimhe.
Cathy: Caoimhe.
Lisa: Caoimhe and Aine.
Ciara C: Aine, Caoimhe and Fiona
Simon: Aine.

Catholic Confirmation May 2000.

"Remember when we were in Rang 1 we were joined by pupils from Naíonáin Mhóra for a whole year"

Desert Island

Pick one girl and boy to be stuck on a desert island with?

Cathal: Seosamh and Lisa.
Simon: Cathal and Lisa.

Ciara C: Emma and Seán.

Béibhinn: Ciara B and Cathal.

Cathy: Seosamh and Lisa.

Ciara B: Emma and Béibhinn.
(broke the rule!)

Edwina: Béibhinn and Seán.

Lisa: Cathy and Seosamh.

Seosamh: Lisa and Seán.

Seán: Cathy and Seosamh.

Emma: Ciara B and Béibhinn (broke the rule!)

"I wonder when this school will be in a building which looks like a school?"

A sad day or not

Will you be sad leaving this school?

Béibhinn: I will, but at the same time I'm looking forward
to moving on to secondary school.

Lisa: Yes I will miss Ciara and the school.

Cathy: Yes.

Cathal: Yes.

Ciara C: Yes.

Ciara B: Yes and I will miss Ciara C.

Emma: Yes.

Seosamh: No

Seán: No.

Edwina: Yes.

Simon: Not really.

My Favourite School Tour by Cathy

My favourite school tour was when we went to Dublin. We went up there on the train. We meet at the train station at seven o clock and we had to wait for our train and when it came we were only on it for half an hour.

After that amount of time we got off that train and we went on a different train and this time we were on it for a longer amount of time.

A friend of Caoimhe's came along to help and they talked to us on the train and gave us a little bit more information on what we would be doing when we reached the Dublin train station.

When we met our pen pals they had come from Sligo and it had taken them a lot longer to reach Dublin. We went over to them but since we had never met them face to face before every one was quite shy.

Then we went inside a very big building to see a type of play called 'The Dream workshop'. I enjoyed that quite a lot and I think every one else enjoyed it too. Then we all went to a Viking Expedition.

I thought that was quite good too and so did every one else. Then we had lunch and a bit of a walk around the scenery was great! Then after that, we went into a gift shop to have a look around and maybe buy some things.

I bought some presents for my parents and my brother, Dan. After that our pen pals had sure what we did then but I think we went back to the train station to go back to Sligo. We went to get ice cream and we all liked that! I'm not go back home.

By the time we got home it was nearly nine or ten o' clock and I was very tired. I had a very good time that day even if it doesn't sound like very much now.

Rang 1 in 1995 with our friends from Naíonáin

The Teachers—Na Múinteoirí

" How may teachers did we have, and can you remember each one? Do you know where they are now?"

Naoínáin Bheaga
Múinteoir Fiona
Naoínáin Mhóra
Múinteoir Fiona
Rang-1 agus 2
Múinteoir Colm
Rang-3 & 4 Múinteoir Caoimhe
Rang-5 Múinteoir Colm
Rang-5 Múinteoir Dorothy
Rang-5 Múinteoir Aine
Rang-6
Múinteoir Caoimhe

These are the teachers our class has had .
As you will see we had three teachers in 5th class.
We started with Colm, who was at the time the Principal of the school. He taught us for about 4 months. Then we had Dorothy, but she left after about 3 months on Maternity Leave. The we had a substitute teacher named Aine. We had her Until June. Dorothy came back for the last week.

Colm Ó Cuanacháin by Lisa

Colm was in our school for seven years He was a very helpful teacher The best thing about him was that no matter how low you were he was always there to cheer us up to talk to if you needed some one to talk to.

He tried not to put anyone under pressure and that always made us more confident and more happy with our selves which made us work better He was always teaching us about Human Rights and how to except other people no matter how different they were.

He was also very interested in P.E. and always trying to introduce new things to the school He was our class teacher for two and a half years and he told us one morning that he had accepted a job in Dublin we were all very sad to see him go.

We hope he is enjoying his new job where ever he is.

"Colm was our second priomhoide after Fiona. He was in turn replaced by Fiona, then by Pádraig, again by Fiona and now by Ray"

What our parents think!

In what way has your child benefitted from attending this school?

Ciara Cnoic's parents

She has a good standard of Irish She has been in a low pupil/ teacher ratio class. She has been very happy at this school.

Béibhinn's parents

We feel that being bilingual is a great asset to Béibhinn and this will help her throughout her life. She has also benefited from having dedicated teachers and from spending her formative years in an atmosphere that promoted a love of learning in her.

Edwina's parents

Wonderful teachers have given her an excellent education. She is fluent in Irish and has been given a great insight into all cultures through the school.

Cathal's parents

Because of the small class size he has had a lot more individual attention than he would have if he were in a bigger class He has a much better standard in Irish than he would have had (had he gone elsewhere).
Like all of 6th class, he is leaving primary confident and competent socially and academically.

Do you recall any funny incident that occurred in your child 's younger years ?

Lisa's parents

One morning I was late for work, so I dropped Lisa of at the school gate-not knowing they had no school that day. Lisa had tried to open the school door and caught her finger in the door. She was crying and the lady who lived in the house beside the school heard her Lisa told her where I worked and she rang me. I collected Lisa –I'm still trying to live down the reputation of being the worst mother!

Edwina's parents

After seeing a photograph of herself crying on her first day of school in the newspaper-she didn't cry going to school again.

Ciara B's parents

Ciara was very unhappy in her old school and when we moved her to the Gaelscoil Fiona allowed her big brother to sit in the class for a couple of mornings.

Caoimhe's Predictions !!!!

What Caoimhe thinks we will be when we grow up……

Béibhinn: something artistic ,musical or to do with Literature maybe.

Lisa: maybe on T.V or the Radio.

Cathy: something to do with Literature, maybe.

Ciara B : a teacher.

Edwina: something to do with sicence.

Ciara C; a teacher.

Simon: a millonaire, in his thoughts alone

Cathal: involved with the Law.

Emma: a teacher.

Seosamh: a D.J or something to do with land.

Seán: something to do with nature or animals.

Ag caint le Fiona

Interview with Fiona

Q What was your first impression of our class?
A. Quite and well behaved.
Q Do you remember anything funny that happened while you were teaching us?
A. St. Mary's provided many funny incidents including wandering patients.
Q. How do you think we have changed since we started school?
A. You have grown up very quickly - making me feel very old -more sensible, reliable. Many talents have shone through.
Q Was anyone in the class particularly troublesome?
A. No.
Q. If you weren't a teacher what would you be?
A. II would have studied law.
Q. 6. What was your favourite class to teach so far?
A. Your class!
Q. Out of all the teachers that have come and gone, whom do you miss the most the most?
A. Colm.
Q. If you were a child in our class, who would be your best friend?
A. Seosamh!
Q. Are the junior classes that are coming in to the school now much different from when the school first started?
A. Children have become more confident.
Q. Do you remember any in particular about our first day at school?
A. Edwina crying, newspaper photographers and a TV crew.
Q. Why did this school appeal to you?
A. I liked the ethos of the school, also being the first multi-denominational Gaelscoil in the country, it was exciting.
Q. When you taught us, what did you think we would be when we grew up?

Cathal: law or a suit and tie job.
Seán: soldier.
Simon: comedian.
Lisa: On T.V or radio.
Cathy: Artist or model.
Emma: teacher.
Ciara C: musician.
Ciara B: working with clothes
Béibhinn: Music or Law.
Edwina: teacher

Interviews with Caoimhe & Fiona

Interview with Caoimhe

Q. What was your first impressions of our class?
A. It was a Small class, more girls than boys, and once I got to know all of you I realised you were a very nice class.
Q. How do you think we have changed since you first met us?
A. You work very well as a group and got along well. You're always trying to help each other and you seem very happy in yourselves.
Q. How will you feel when we leave?
A. I will be sad because you are the first group of junior infants in the school and it will seem like the end of an era when you leave.
Q. Have you enjoyed teaching us compared to other classes?
A. Yes You're always very willing to learn and that makes my job much Easier.
Q. What would you be if you weren't a teacher?
A.I would have gone to art college.
Q. If you were a child in our class, do you think your best friend would be?
A. I can't answer that but I bet on well with a group.

"Caoimhe and Fiona in conversation and being asked very awkward questions!"

Multi-religion gaelscoil to open tomorrow

By ÁILÍN QUINLAN

IRELAND's first multi-denominational all-Irish school opens its doors tomorrow amid much media hype — but without Department of Education sanction.

The school, which will open its doors to up to 40 pupils between the ages of four and five at 9.00 a.m. tomorrow, is located in a vacant part of St Mary's Convalescent Home, Montenotte, Cork.

Last night Eoil Ó Laoire, chairman of the organising committee behind the school, said he believed the delay in sanction arises from the Department of Education's difficulty in slotting the new school into any of the traditional categories.

To date, he said, most gaelscolleanna were run by the Catholic Church, while multi-denominational schools were English language schools.

"We are a combination of multi-denominational and Irish-speaking, and, as such, set a precedent. It is new ground for the Department."

However, he said, he was confident that the sanction would come.

"Sometimes the Department sanction comes after the school opens, and there is no problem."

While the majority of the 40 pupils were Catholic, Mr Ó Laoire stressed that the core curriculum was based on a multi-denominational environment which favoured no one religion.

"We provide a multi-denominational core curriculum and then it is the right of each parent in the school to have individual denominational religious instruction which the school would facilitate."

Even though the school was multi-denominational there would be a First Communion class in the coming school year, he explained.

Tomorrow's opening is expected to be covered by television, while a Channel Four crew is due to film classes later this week.

EXAMINER SEPT '93

Gaelscoil for all to get approval

By CLODAGH FINN
Education Correspondent

THE country's first multi-denominational all-Irish school went ahead and opened its doors in Cork yesterday without Department of Education approval.

But last night, a Department of Education spokesperson reassured parents and pupils at the new Scoil Gort Alainn, that the school would be sanctioned as soon as school management and patronage arrangements had been hammered out.

Procedures have already been established for gaelscoileanna and multi-denominational schools, but the Department has never had precedent for a multi-denominational gaelscoil, he said.

"That is a completely new phenomenon in Irish education," he added, stressing that departmental approval would be forthcoming if the appropriate procedures were followed.

Chairman of the school's organising committee, Eoghan O'Laoire, admitted the delay in sanction had caused some problems, but he said he was confident the situation would be sorted out as soon as possible.

He said the school had met all Department of Education criteria except one which stipulates a local bishop becomes the school's patron.

"We met with the Diocesan Secretariat and they said if parents agreed, the Bishop would be prepared to nominate one of them to the board of management. It is ironic that the Secretariat have accepted this, while the Department of Education has not," he said.

But he said Scoil Gort Alainn was determined to win recognition because parents were anxious to provide an all-Irish multi-denominational education for their children.

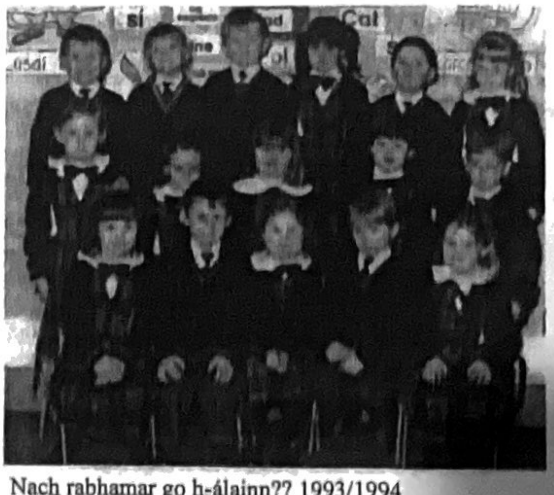
While most of the parents want their children to be brought up as Catholics, Mr O'Laoire said they did not want emphasis to be put on any one religion in the curriculum.

A group of parents came up with the concept of a multi-denominational gaelscoil when they met over a year ago to discuss their children's education.

● See page 14.

The Class

We started off big,
And ended up small,
Sixteen to eleven through winter and fall.
Bíonn an sport againn
Sa rang seo le chéile,
Ó Meán Fómhair go Iúil,
Ag ceiliúradh gach féile.
We have been through a lot,
From beginning to end,
Slán libh anois,
From all your old friends.



Nach rabhamar go h-álainn?? 1993/1994

Goodbye time

This project was undertaken by three pupils in sixth class of Gaelscoil an Ghoirt Álainn, Montenotte, Corcaigh.

The project was for Múinteoir Caoimhe, and was part of the work in English class.

The three pupils involved are Béibhinn Ní Laoire, Lisa Ní hAodh, and Cathy Cuisín.

They wish to thank all the parents who helped by answering the questionnaire. They particularly wish to thank their own parents who helped in many practical and encouraging ways.

They also wish to thank all the teachers in Gaelscoil an Ghoirt Álainn, particularly Fiona and Caoimhe, who were willing not alone to help, but also to be subjected to very careful interview.

Finally they wish to thank their classmates who both helped and encouraged, not alone in this project but also by being themselves for the past eight years. THANKS!

A special thanks to Eoghan Ó Laoire who devoted many hours to help put this project together for us.